

## TEARS IN HEAVEN?

by Willis E. Bishop  
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"For we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Romans 14:10).

"So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10). It is sometimes referred to as the bema seat judgment. That is because that's the Greek word.

"Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire. And the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire" (I Corinthians 3:13-15). And I add, even though already saved by grace.

This judgment will take place immediately after the rapture. It will be one of those events which will take place either in the air or in Heaven while the events of the Tribulation period are unfolding here on Earth. It is an event in which every believer in this age will appear before the Lord for judgment.

This judgment must be distinguished from the judgment of the nations, the Great White Throne judgment, and the judgment of the nation of Israel. It is not to determine eternal destiny, but to determine rewards.

At the end of the Tribulation period there is a judgment of the nation of Israel (Ezekiel 20) - that is the living nation of Israel. Unbelievers will be weeded out of the nation of Israel, and only believers will go into the Millennial period.

The judgment of the nations (Matthew 25) is sometimes misunderstood. That will be the judgment of living nations and, again, unbelievers will be weeded out and their lives taken, and only living, believing Gentiles will be permitted to enter the Millennial period. So, the Lord begins the Millennial period with only saved people - Jew and Gentile.

At the end of the Millennial period will be the Great White Throne judgment, in which the unsaved of all ages will stand for judgment and then be cast into the Lake of Fire.

The bema seat judgment must be distinguished from these other judgments.

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Comment: These are final judgments, not like the ones today that are taken to a higher court.

A. This is the higher court - the highest court - and one that will do things right. The judge of all of these will be the Lord Jesus Christ. John 5:17 says, "And the Father has committed all judgment unto the Son because He is a [not the] son of man." The Lord will be the fair, final judge of all human beings.

These verses teach me that as a result of the judgment of believers' works there will be much sorrow and many tears.

There are believers who are not living for the Lord. If they do not get that straightened out before the rapture, when they stand before the Lord there will be tears. In the Corinthians passage which I quoted, "their works shall be burned." There will be tears at the bema seat judgment.

It is better to have the record clear, to have the Lord as our High Priest take care of things before these events take place. In many cases that will not be true, so that in Heaven, if you please, there will be sorrow and many tears.

Turn to Revelation 21. In chapter 20 verse 11 there is the Great White Throne judgment, which is the last of the judgments. Then it is written in 21:4: And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There shall be no more death nor sorrow, nor outcry. There shall be no more pain, because the former things have passed away.

I rather think that is placed chronologically where it ought to be. After all the judgments are over, then God will wipe away all tears. But there will be tears in Heaven if my record is not straight before the Lord.

Turn to Revelation 22:17: And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come, Lord Jesus [that is the "maranatha" idea]." And let him who hears say, "Come." And let him who is athirst come to Jesus. For whoever desires, let him take of the water of life freely."

In light of the coming of the Lord, "Whosoever will may come." As we close this session of the Bible study until September, I speak to you especially watching TV 3 that you make sure you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior. He is waiting to receive you. Clear the record and wait for His blessed coming.